

Foreword

After developing one of the most advanced transparency frameworks among Mexican states, Coahuila now has an historic opportunity to move beyond transparency to set up a comprehensive and coherent integrity system. In July 2017, the Mexican state of Coahuila adopted a reform to create an Anti-corruption System, modelled on Mexico's National Anti-corruption System. The System will be crucial for providing a sustainable response to local risks of corruption and for driving the state's sustained economic growth towards inclusiveness and social cohesion.

Although the reform itself is a fundamental part of a new strategic approach to fighting corruption, the current implementation phase is just as important. Indeed, it poses a number of challenges common among states undergoing similar changes. To implement the reform, Coahuila needs to create new institutions and to amend or adopt secondary legislation. Most importantly, however, the implementation phase requires Coahuila to create a culture of integrity within the government, private sector, and in the whole-of-society, demonstrating to citizens the state's determination to tackle corruption in a decisive and comprehensive way.

Trust in government is forged at the local and sub-national level in Mexico, including Coahuila and its municipalities. Local authorities have important responsibilities and provide a wide range of public services involving high exposure to the public such as the management of water, streetlights, waste, markets, and streets. Past scandals have fuelled disillusionment and loss of confidence among citizens in Coahuila; data from the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía) show that 44% and 38% of its population think corruption is common in the state government and in the municipalities, respectively. Through the implementation of the Local Anti-corruption System, Coahuila can restore trust in public institutions and therefore improve the willingness of citizens and businesses to endorse public policies and contribute to sustainable economic development and the rule of law.

This Integrity Review analyses the integrity system of Coahuila and provides a series of recommendations based on international best practices according to the 2017 OECD Recommendation on Public Integrity. On the one hand, the Review acknowledges areas where significant steps have been taken in recent years. These steps have led to the creation of one of the most advanced transparency frameworks in the country, the establishment of standards of conduct for public officials, and a Conflict-of-Interest Manifest for state government suppliers. On the other hand, the Review identifies the key challenges Coahuila is facing in creating a comprehensive and effective integrity system. These challenges include establishing effective co-ordination with municipalities, building a culture of integrity, setting up a whistleblower protection framework, and implementing and supporting the internal control framework to better identify and mitigate corruption risks. Although each of these areas should be addressed differently, several important recurring themes emerge from the Review's recommendations. These include the need for more visible leadership to implement existing frameworks and closer engagement with civil society to further promote the public interest. Moreover, increased training, guidance and advice, as well as additional technical and financial resources are needed to sustain the effectiveness of the new local integrity system.

All around the world, local governments are increasingly expected to take part in national anti-corruption efforts. In doing so, they face limitations and challenges that require them to find effective and innovative solutions. Coahuila is the first sub-national entity to undergo an OECD Integrity Review. The following months and years will test whether Coahuila will assume the necessary leadership to face the challenges identified in the Integrity Review, but also to seize the opportunities presented by the implementation of a system involving all levels of government. While the solid transparency framework of Coahuila is a fundamental starting point for such an endeavour, the effectiveness and real impact of the new system will depend on its inclusiveness and the government's capacity to embed a culture of integrity among its officials.



Luiz de Mello
Director a.i.
Public Governance Directorate, OECD

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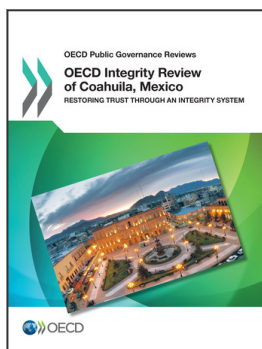
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